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RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE IMMEDIATE 3656  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 3049  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE IMMEDIATE  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BISHKEK 001296

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STATE FOR SCA/CEN

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: CONTINUING EFFORTS BY THE PRESIDENTIAL SECRETARIAT  
TO REFORM KYRGYZ SOCIETY AND POLICIES

Classified By: Ambassador Tatiana C. Gfoeller, for Reasons 1.4 (b) and  
(d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: During a friendly lunch at the Ambassador's residence, Oksana Malevanaya, the Head of the Presidential Secretariat, discussed the continuing Islamization of Kyrgyz society, its impact on human and women's rights, and the Secretariat's plans to address the increasing spread of Islam in Kyrgyzstan. The dynamic, self-described "Jewish single mother" provided her feelings on the Kyrgyz religion law and the return of Radio Azattyk to Government radio and television, and also detailed the Secretariat's work to reform the judicial system and develop a new foreign policy framework. End Summary.

¶2. (C) The Ambassador lunched with Oksana Malevanaya, the Head of the Presidential Secretariat, on December 8 to discuss the Secretariat's latest activities and seek Malevanaya's thoughts on a number of human and women's rights-related issues. The meeting was cordial and Malevanaya appeared willing to speak frankly regarding her opinions on several sensitive issues.

#### CONCERNS ABOUT GROWING RELIGIOUSITY

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¶3. (C) Malevanaya discussed several of the Secretariat's current efforts, including a plan to address the increasing Islamization of Kyrgyzstan. Malevanaya admitted that President Bakiyev in particular had become concerned with the spread of Islam throughout southern Kyrgyzstan, and had asked the Secretariat to devise a plan to slow this trend. According to Malevanaya, the President acknowledged that while the Soviet System had many faults, one of its positive attributes in his mind was the creation of a secular state. President Bakiyev had become especially concerned with Islam's negative impact on Kyrgyz women.

¶4. (C) Malevanaya noted to the Ambassador that the form of Islam practiced in Kyrgyzstan was not a pure Islam but instead contained certain Pagan traditions that were not practiced by other Muslim nations. Though still in the early stages, Malevanaya planned to emphasize Kyrgyzstan's

pre-Islamic religions (such as Tengrianism) and traditions and the idea of tolerance as opposed to strict orthodoxy. Malevanaya admitted that while the Government would continue to pay lip service to the idea of a tolerant/moderate version on Islam in Kyrgyzstan, Malevanaya did not think a moderate form of Islam was possible. Therefore, while the plan would nominally uphold Islamic traditions, the actual goal was to support and encourage more secular, progressive ideals.

15. (C) Malevanaya continued by expressing alarm at the financial resources arriving to Kyrgyzstan from the Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia, and Egypt that were being used to reshape religion in Kyrgyzstan. Malevanaya claimed that the money was in certain cases being used to bribe Kyrgyz families into sending their children to madrassas. Malevanaya attributed this foreign influence and the spread of Islam in general to the corrupt and naive manner of the Government during the early 1990s. She claimed that leaders as well as common Kyrgyz citizens were unaware of Islam's anti-human/women's rights positions during that time, and that foreigners with large financial resources who were looking to increase the influence of Islam were able to act freely then.

#### RELIGIOUS FREEDOM & HUMAN RIGHTS

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16. (C) The Ambassador regretted the law on religion adopted in early 2009, noting that the law was too restrictive and violated human and religious rights. Malevanaya agreed with

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the Ambassador, noting that the original goal of the law was to restrict Wahabbists and other radical Islamic proselytizers. The result, however, was that the law restricted the action of inoffensive and non-violent Christian followers, while allowing radical Islam and the funding of it to continue. Malevanaya observed that the intended Islamic groups were too secretive to be impacted by the law and that only law-abiding religious entities were being affected. Malevanaya stated that she would be working on revising this law such that it more properly addressed the true threat of radical Islamic groups.

17. (C) The Ambassador criticized the current human rights situation in the country, noting the recent killing and beatings of journalists and the politically motivated trials against opposition supporters. Malevanaya agreed and acknowledged that the Government needed to do more to improve the human rights climate. She added that the Government was exploring ways to boost the authority of the Ombudsman in order to give the Office more authority to ensure that the Government respected human rights. The Ambassador also raised the idea of holding a women's rights conference in Bishkek and sought Malevanaya's willingness to participate in the forum. Malevanaya pledged her utmost cooperation for such an event, and promised to send the Ambassador possible themes as well as information on prominent Kyrgyz women who could also participate.

18. (C) The Ambassador raised the issue of Radio Azattyk with Malevanaya, and strongly urged her, along with the new Director of the Kyrgyz National Television and Radio Company (KTR), to reconsider placing Radio Azattyk back on the air. Malevanaya replied frankly that she was a supporter of freedom of speech, but stated that Radio Azattyk had developed a stance that every decision made by the Government was incorrect. Malevanaya noted that President Bakiyev had been insulted by the attacks waged against him by Azattyk, and that Azattyk conducted attacks not only against the President's policies but against him personally. Malevanaya explained that BBC news had returned to KTR because it took a more fair and balanced approach. After being further pushed by the Ambassador, Malevanaya agreed to a future conversation and/or meeting with Radio Liberty officials at which time she would be willing to explain her concerns. Malevanaya

admitted that she could be persuaded to change her position and support the return of Radio Azattyk programming were Azattyk to agree to a more balanced approach.

#### ADDITIONAL GOVERNMENT REFORMS

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¶9. (C) In addition to the already mentioned activities of the Secretariat, Malevanaya explained that she was currently involved in devising a program of judicial reform that the President hoped to introduce before the end of the year. Additionally, Malevanaya noted that the Secretariat, and not the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was drafting a new strategy for Kyrgyz external relations that President Bakiyev planned to share with the general public during a televised speech on December 24.

¶10. (C) The Ambassador questioned Malevanaya regarding the recent closure of the Drug Control Agency (DCA) and its absorption into the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), noting the previously strong cooperation between the DCA and the U.S. Government. Malevanaya noted that there had previously been too many overlapping agencies and that for this reason, the DCA's responsibilities had been assumed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Malevanaya stated that in principle, the Government's position on drug cooperation would not change. Malevanaya stated she had recently received a report detailing the Government's revised drug plans, but admitted to not yet having fully digested the

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report.

#### BIOGRAPHY NOTES

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¶11. (C) In discussing her family, Malevanaya stated proudly that she is "a Jewish single mother." She explained that her maternal great grandfather had moved from France to Russia in 1914, in some capacity having to do with World War I. There, he met and married a Russian woman, and the two settled in Moscow. Malevanaya's father's family was from Ukraine and Lodz, Poland. After marrying, Malevanaya's parents resided in Russia before moving to Kyrgyzstan at an unspecified time. Malevanaya herself was born in Kyrgyzstan.

¶12. (C) Malevanaya spoke of her sister Larisa, who works as a journalist and is considered an expert in human rights. Malevanaya told the Ambassador that she has a 15 year old daughter, Alissa, and a 1.5 year old son, Donat. When speaking of her husband, Malevanaya claimed to the Ambassador that he had "died tragically" in March 2009 without providing any additional details. Based on the stated timing of her husband's death and the widely reported relationship between Malevanaya and former Presidential Chief of Staff Medet Sadyrkulov, Embassy suspects that Malevanaya was referring to Sadyrkulov in this instance.  
GFOELLER